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## THE COMPARATIVE RÔLE OF THE GROUP CONCEPT IN WARD'S *DYNAMIC SOCIOLOGY* AND CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY

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### I. THE GROWTH OF GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS

A study in social theory cannot ignore the fundamental fact of the social life, which is the source of all sound theory as it is the test of all results of reflection. The attempt to separate social life from social theory is one that has resulted in disaster both for the theory and for the on-going life-stream.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand it creates a theory which, like metaphysical philosophy, finally exhausts itself in fruitless evanescent speculations; and on the other hand, by failing to furnish the developing life a working and tested technique, it has allowed the social life to develop as an undirected and wasteful process. If one accepts the conclusion arrived at by Herbert Spencer in his *Social Statics* and developed

<sup>1</sup> For one of the best illustrations both of the fact and the results of such separation one might call attention to Germany. Professor John Dewey, in his *German Philosophy and Politics*, makes this attempted separation on the part of German thinkers the key to his interpretation of the German nation. The German attempt to reconcile esoteric intellectual freedom, an ideal freedom, with an autocratically dominated social and industrial life was an impossible attempt, and one which led to German ruin and a shaken world.

by Sumner, namely, that the social process<sup>1</sup> goes on irrespective of social control or direction, then indeed, the second of the consequences of the separation of theory from social life is probably a desideratum, for it brings about the result aimed at, namely, non-interference in the workings of a process of natural laws. But society at large, social scientists in general, and sociologists in particular, have swung away from the laissez faire philosophy and are more and more given to a refinement of their technique of social control on the assumption that such tools will have an actual use in modifying the social process.<sup>2</sup> The conclusion seems to be sound that social theory and the social process are somehow interrelated, and can never be wholly or to any extent separated if thought is to remain sound and instrumental, and if the activities of life are to be saved from the wasteful and costly results of uncontrolled movements.<sup>3</sup> Whatever valuation may be put on the place of social theory, whether one regard it as performing the function of leadership in mediating group crises and as thus shaping and influencing social development, or whether one regard it as merely a rationalizing of, and speculation on, past events, and relatively ineffective and futile both as an academic pursuit and as a practicable matter, one must assume that there is some connection more or less vital between social theory and social life. We may take it for granted, then, that the development of social theory in general, or of any partial phase of social theory, has been more or less closely related to the actual social life which has developed. We should expect, if that were our present problem, to find that such

<sup>1</sup> The concept "social process" is used here in the sense in which it has been largely standardized by Dr. Small in his *General Sociology*.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Small has called attention (*American Journal of Sociology*, XXI, 755) to the fact that L. F. Ward's most significant contribution to sociology in America is his emphasis on the psychic factor as a new and controlling factor in human development. On this Ward joined issue with Sumner and Spencer and became a pioneer in this respect in social science in the United States.

<sup>3</sup> One might call attention here to the nature of thought and its function as described by that group of writers who are referred to by such terms as functionalists, behaviorists, pragmatists, instrumentalists. The essence of this view, I take it, is (in so far as this point is concerned) that thought is conduct, reflection is a type of *conduct* and arises in mediation of crises, i.e., conflict situations. On this assumption then social theory must be organically and functionally connected with the social process. They cannot be separated.

shifts as may be shown to have taken place in sociological thought during the last four decades have had a direct relation to the enormous changes that have taken place in our industrial, technical, agricultural, and, in a word, our whole social structure and function. To trace out that relation is not our present problem. Such a task remains to be done in a separate work. The assumption upon which succeeding chapters rest is that those who rely almost exclusively on social theory on the one hand, and those who scoff at theory as relatively futile and archaic on the other, are both wrong; that a better working hypothesis is that the true relation is a constantly developing reciprocal, a give-and-take process. A well-rounded discussion must include them both. Instrumentalist philosophy and psychology discover in social theory and the social process two phases of a more rational societal evolution.

Without attempting further to investigate the problem of the causal relationship between social theory and social life since 1880, it is essential to give in bold strokes some of the more striking changes in American social development since the date mentioned, in order that there may appear the whole complex background for the consideration of one phase of the shift in social theory. In general it may be said that *such changes indicate a growing consciousness of the fundamental nature of the group* in all the multiplied forms of social activity. It is the purpose of the rest of this chapter to point out such facts in more detail.

First of all one must note the changes that have taken place in the economic processes of society, particularly in industry, and the group organizations of persons interested or employed in those processes. The possibilities latent in the principle of the division of labor have reached a realization since 1880 such as was undreamed of in the earlier periods of our industrial development. The application of inventions to productive processes, the utilization of steam power, the increase in means of transportation of the earlier part of the last century, prepared the way for an industrial expansion, following the panic of 1873, which altered our whole life, created what is known as big business, made the factory the dominant mode of industrial production, conditioned the appearance of the various forms of combination, made necessary the readjustment

of labor problems, stimulated the concentration of people in cities, and resulted in the transition of American life from an agricultural to a predominantly industrial type. On the whole, then, however long the factors had been preparing for the shift, the four decades since 1880 have seen enormous changes in our whole life. The individualism so characteristic of American life began to give way to a collectivism of fact in which group solidarity began to rise into consciousness as a matter of practical importance and significance. Individualism began to break down in business, in community life, in actual governmental practice, in religious and social organization of all types; and in the place of the atomistic nature of our previous social organization there developed what Dicey has called, in speaking of England of the nineteenth century, the central fact, namely, the trend to collectivism. This trend has not been a movement carefully planned and directed by a foreseeing leadership. It has been largely a result of a crude and blind change brought about by the new factors arising in the whole social situation. What these factors are has been suggested. The chief ones are the development of the means of communication and transportation both within the country and with other countries. Speedy and wide diffusion of intelligence makes possible the formation of great industries, while the development of transportation facilities both in capacity and in speed is essential for the handling of the products of those industries. By means of such improvements the western part of the country became economically incorporated into national life, the frontier of free land disappeared, no longer affording an outlet for the economically suppressed.

It is not without significance that the development of communication and transportation finds a corresponding development in what is known as business combinations. The latter are confined almost wholly in their important phases to the period beginning after the panic of 1873.<sup>1</sup> There were, of course, "agreements" prior to that time, but the year 1877 saw the birth of the

<sup>1</sup> "The panic of 1873 again accelerated the movement toward industrial combination by forcing many small concerns into bankruptcy; and soon after the recovery from the panic of 1893 the rush toward integration of industries began." Carlton, *History and Problems of Organized Labor*, p. 68.

great railroad "pools" which were the dominating form of consolidation down to the nineties.<sup>1</sup> The form of combination of capital has varied, viz., amalgamations, mergers, etc., but the development has been steadily toward a larger and more finished consolidation of capitalistic enterprise. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890 is an evidence of a growing consciousness of a new and important change in American industrial life. It indicated a pronounced trend toward capitalistic solidarity and community of interest. Out of the actual experiences of life and the increased technical facilities there has arisen a new sense of group solidarity which is essential for industrial progress. This necessarily has conditioned profound changes in every form of social life, and enters into and shapes the form and content of the smallest primary groups in society.

Thus far in the discussion of economic changes, attention has been directed primarily to the organization of capital, of industries, and their increased consciousness of economic solidarity. Before leaving this part of the discussion, however, attention must be given to that other large factor in industrial enterprise, namely, labor. One might term this the reverse side of the shield; for along with other industrial changes there have come many changes in the quality of labor, the nature of labor, the racial composition of laborers, their forms of association, and their philosophy of labor and life. The chief interest for us at this point is the development of group consciousness and group solidarity among laborers and of combinations of laborers for various ends. Possibly no part of our population shows more clearly the growth of a practical recognition of the essential part that a group plays than does the labor movement.

The movement toward organization and combination among American laborers began very early in the nation's history, but it is practically true that the important development of labor organizations has come since the Civil War and particularly since 1880.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Haney, *Business Organization and Combination*, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Unions had been formed as early as 1825, workingmen's parties had been organized, papers had been published, but all were sporadic and short lived.

"All the labor movements of the pre-Civil War period were ephemeral and soon disintegrated."<sup>1</sup> It was not until the last quarter of the past century that conditions were ripe for the appearance of powerful labor groups paralleling chronologically the appearance of combinations of capital and large-scale industry. Professor Carlton summarizes the point thus:

In the Civil War period labor was never strongly organized. No clear vision of the solidarity of the laboring classes had as yet caught and held the attention of the wage earners. But the Civil War made permanent labor organization inevitable. The Civil War marks a transition period in our labor history. Concentrated capital, the extensive use of the subdivided labor, the influx of the cheap labor of Southern Europe, and the peopling of the West have given organized labor its big problems. Henceforward, the United States was destined to be "an industrial community which organized its industries on a large scale." With the panic of 1873 unionism suffered a temporary check only to be followed by a new era in the history of labor organization.<sup>2</sup>

It is not essential to the purpose here to trace out in detail the various stages in the subsequent development of labor organizations. The chief endeavor is to make clear the new era which was ushered in at the close of the panic which began in 1873. Following that period the order known as the Knights of Labor grew up. Its first general assembly was held in 1878, when it reported 80,000 members. By 1885 its members exceeded 100,000, and the next year it reached the high-water mark of its career with a membership of more than 600,000. With its purposes, organization, and work, we are not here concerned. It is sufficient to point out that it subsequently gave way to another organization founded in 1881, the American Federation of Labor, which grew slowly but surely until it became and still is the dominant force in the labor world. The history of this latest body is a study in itself, and is outside the limits of this investigation. As it stands it is an interesting commentary on, and witness of, the enormous changes that have taken place in industrial life since its inception. It is particularly interesting in so far as it shows the steady trend toward the group basis of labor activity, and the increasing consciousness of

<sup>1</sup> Carlton, *History and Problems of Organized Labor*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

the occupational group as a factor in individual development and social organization.

Although passing through various crises and varying fortunes, the authorities in control of the Federation have pretty generally maintained the policy of trade unionism as against industrial unionism, and have pretty consistently refrained from political organization and action to attain their ends. It has been pointed out<sup>1</sup> that the trade-union type must eventually give way to the industrial type as a result of the changes that have taken place in industrial organizations. The increased concentration of the latter, and the abolition of skilled trades in great factories through the introduction of more complex and efficient machinery, have paved the way for a different type of labor group organizations. One writer expresses the view thus:

These facts point toward the conclusion that the industrial union is an effective form of organization. The evidence, moreover, leads almost inevitably to the further conclusion that the old line type of separate trade-unions, even when loosely affiliated with each other through the American Federation, cannot effectively cope with hostile trusts and strong employers' associations except in those cases in which skill or a particularly strategic situation gives them an advantageous position. Greater solidarity than craft unionism is necessary to cope with the trust employing minutely subdivided labor.<sup>2</sup>

If the conclusion just stated be true, and the industrial union gradually supplants the trade-union in all except the particularly skilled trades and those involving unusual responsibility as well as skill, then a new type of labor solidarity arises, that of the particular industry rather than that of disparate trades within an industry. Such a transformation brings about new attitudes, new group consciousness and new powers. It dissolves the basis for the older trade-union aristocracy, and supplants it with a more democratic type of group alignment and group control. It makes possible one of the first steps toward the organization of all or a large majority of unskilled workers for positive action. It supplants the older conception of democracy as a rule by individuals in the mass with the sounder conception of the group as the unit

<sup>1</sup> Parker, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, XXXIV, 564-69. Cummins, *American Journal of Sociology*, XIII, 759.

<sup>2</sup> Carlton, *History and Problems of Organized Labor*, p. 77.



and agency of democratic progress.<sup>1</sup> Political theorists are giving increasing attention to the occupational group as a basis for representation, on the ground that such groups constitute more effective units than geographical districts, and that representations from such groups come nearer to representing some definite factor in the social organization. If future experience proves the need for greater permanence of such shifts in the method of representation, one of the preparatory steps is that of the organization of the unskilled workers on an industrial rather than on a trade or craft basis. What may be the final issue is not to be predicted; the purpose here is merely to call attention to a perceptible shift in the type of group organization that is going on in a relatively blind and unreflective manner among the workers, as a result of certain new and changing factors in the whole industrial situation, and to suggest a simultaneous parallel in political theory. It is another signpost pointing to the changing society that has been arising since Ward's *Dynamic Sociology* was in the making.

Another significant implication of the growth of practical group organization among labor is that such organization becomes essential if labor is to assume a share in control of industry. An unorganized mass of unskilled laborers is unfitted for any voice in control or management. The labor group is the first essential, and this is being developed practically by labor itself.

Certain forces in American society seem to be breaking down the second policy of organized labor, namely, non-political action. There can be little doubt that hitherto the leaders of the American Federation have reflected the actual spirit and sentiments of the great mass of laborers as against a militant minority who favored political action. Our type of industrial life, the presence of a large agricultural class, the absence of serious and widespread poverty, etc., have induced a conservative labor opinion and labor leadership. The Great War with its general loosening of bonds, its stimulation of labor's expectations, the rising cost of living, and the labor movements abroad created a new group consciousness in labor ranks. Following the war employers assumed a hostile attitude, government adopted a reactionary policy of

<sup>1</sup> This will be expanded in later chapters. See also Follett, *The New State*.

intimidation, denial of free speech, assembly, and press, reverting to a repressive attitude and the use of legal methods which made clear to a larger part of the workers that mere trade-union warfare even cannot be carried on so long as hostile forces make such trade-union activity impossible. Labor seems forced, therefore, merely in order to preserve and make effective its former policy, to embark upon a political policy to protect its methods from interference and nullification. If such a departure occurs it will mark an increasing importance of economic groups as a factor in social and political life.

The foregoing pages have attempted to present some phases of the economic background for our study of the group concept in social theory since 1880. The central thought throughout has been to call attention to the growth of industry, and of group organizations immediately in connection with industrial life. It is now in order to call attention briefly to the change in governmental practices and policies arising out of the industrial changes during the same period.

One of the most illuminating evidences of the vital changes that have taken place in our whole national life is the change that has taken place in the quality and quantity of governmental "interference" in the industrial processes of our society. Though bitterly contested by industry and hampered by the constitution and the courts, the country has steadily passed from an individualistic laissez faire policy to one of vigorous control of industry and protection of the dependent classes employed in such industries. This transformation has come in response to needs developing out of the actual life of society, and expresses a new consciousness of social solidarity—of the fundamental importance of the group life. In general, one may say that with minor exceptions the bulk of such legislation lies within the period beginning since the seventies. It was a concomitant of those fundamental changes in our industrial life which have been suggested above. On every hand one finds evidence of the collectivistic practice. The government has gone into business. It has created postal savings banks, parcel post; municipalities have extended their control over water plants, the production of gas, heat, and light. Regulation has grown steadily.

The Interstate Commerce Commission and the Sherman Anti-Trust Law are significant in showing the newer attitude of American society. The regulation of railroad rates, services, and business practices, the extension of control over corporations, the pure food laws, reservation of public lands, the conservation of resources, the imposition of inheritance and income taxes, are some of the eloquent witnesses of the increasing insistence upon the social interest in all the manifestations of our industrial energies. The socialization of industry, whether by ownership, as in the case of municipal power and light plants, or by regulation as in the case of the railroads and trusts, or by the still less tangibly coercive method of publicity, is a definite working hypothesis that has developed almost wholly in the last half-century. It is an evidence of a new sense of social solidarity, of group consciousness which has evolved naturally out of the actual social experiences of American life.

In addition to this direct type of social control of industrial life, there is another large and noteworthy class of legislation which is an important part of social interest in economic organization. This includes that body of legislation which has to do with the protection of the labor element in industry. Here again the development of this important program has been almost wholly a phenomenon of the period following the panic of 1873. With the exception of a few isolated and unimportant attempts to limit the hours of labor for women and children, there was practically no labor legislation of importance until after the Civil War period. Even laws relating to child labor did not assume any importance until some time after the Massachusetts acts of 1866 and 1867. It was in the period of expansion following the panic of the next decade that this elementary type of protective legislation became a real factor in legislative control of industry. The same holds true of laws relating to hours of women and of men in public service, to laws regulating conditions of labor, prescribing safety appliances, and protective devices. In addition, workmen's compensation laws, accident insurance, and minimum wage laws for women and children are still more recent.

The strength of the movement for social legislation of these types is clearly shown when it is recalled that they have come in

spite of the strenuous opposition of three powerful influences, namely, first, the owners of the industries themselves; second, the constitution and the courts; and third, the traditional individualistic attitudes of American life.

Still another extension of the principle of group solidarity in legislation is found in the social treatment of disease, both by preventive sanitation, and dissemination of information, and by public and quasi-public agencies and institutions. The growth of the consciousness of the social nature of disease and of group responsibility for the prevention of disease is relatively new. The inclusion of national vitality by the National Conservation Commission<sup>1</sup> as among the chief, if not the chief, national resource is deeply significant in that it shows in another way the increased appearance of group consciousness and group responsibility as a result of scientific discoveries and actual experience in a rapidly intensifying group life. Probably no other period has seen such a rapid recognition of the principles of the social nature of disease and of group responsibility for its prevention and cure as the last four decades.

Another striking example of group consciousness in dealing with a specific problem is the interesting experiment of prohibitory measures in the case of intoxicating liquors. This again is a product of the last few decades. The consummation of this type of social control marks a decided step away from an individualistic attitude, and negative legislative policy, toward a social or group attitude and group assumption of responsibility.

Mention has already been made of the fact that municipal ownership of certain productive enterprises has been accomplished in many cities and towns over the country. The chief forms of municipally owned productive enterprises are those concerned with the manufacture of electricity and gas, the furnishing of water and transportation. The essentially social nature of such activities in municipal life is becoming increasingly clear. Municipal ownership of gas, light, and water plants has become so much a part of the ordinary course of life in many cities as to be no longer

<sup>1</sup> See *Bulletin 30 of the Committee of One Hundred on National Health*, being a report on national vitality by Irving Fisher.

in the field of consciousness—there are no competing moral or political values or plans. Along with these rather stereotyped examples of municipal group activity there have developed the great municipal park systems, municipal improvements of lake fronts and waterways, municipal bathing beaches and pleasure resorts, municipal libraries and restrooms, municipal hospitals and asylums, municipal reference, statistical, and research bureaus, municipal legal aid and welfare associations. These constitute but a partial list of essentially municipal activities which indicate a marvelous growth of the conception of a municipality as an organic unity. On the whole, these developments are relatively recent, coming for the most part since the Civil War and reconstruction period. Speaking of the subtle way in which such a transformation has come in England, Dicey quotes the following statement, reported to be the language of Sidney Webb:

The practical man, oblivious or contemptuous of any theory of the social organism or general principles of social organization, has been forced by the necessities of the time into an ever-deepening collectivist channel. Socialism, of course, he still rejects and despises. The individualist town councillor will walk along the municipal pavement, lit by municipal gas, and cleansed by municipal broom, with municipal water, and seeing, by the municipal clock in the municipal market, that he is too early to meet his children coming from the municipal school hard by the county lunatic asylum and municipal hospital, will use the national telegraph system to tell them not to walk through the municipal park, but to come by the municipal tramway, to meet him in the municipal reading room by the municipal art gallery, museum, library, where he intends to consult some of the national publications in order to prepare his next speech in the municipal town hall in favor of the nationalization of canals and the increase of government control over the railway system. "Socialism, Sir!" he will say, "don't waste the time of a practical man by your fantastic absurdities." "Self-help! Sir, individual self-help, that's what's made our city what it is."<sup>1</sup>

Without much change this statement would be true of numerous municipalities in the United States.

Turning aside from the strictly official or governmental agencies, such as the foregoing, which have arisen, there is found a large list of community activities which are properly voluntary move-

<sup>1</sup> Reputed to be the language of Sidney Webb by George Eastgate in the *Times*, August 23, 1902. Quoted by Dicey in *Law and Public Opinion*, pp. 286-87.

ments, but which are essentially expressions of the same practical interest in and consciousness of the unity of community life in a more restricted geographical extent than the municipally owned and controlled industries and agencies. The establishment of community centers, of neighborhood groups for various economic, social, and educational ends, is one of the more recent phases of the growth of group consciousness in various areas of cities of all sizes.<sup>1</sup> The use of the school as a social center and the creation of other institutions around which the community interests may center and develop are among the most hopeful evidences of a solution of numerous municipal problems. In the main, this type of development has not arisen out of a theoretical scheme clamped down on a given community, but it has arisen out of the actual growth of the community problems and interests. It has come about through the discovery of a community of interest and a recognition of social solidarity, while almost unconsciously pursuing disparate individual ends. In so far as leadership in the form of community plans has arisen, it has largely arisen in response to the developing needs as revealed in the crises of the local group life. Church life and structure, school curricula, and programs of other agencies have responded to, rather than created, the essence of the group life. But whatever the relative place of the theory and practice in this particular case, it seems quite clear that a new sense of group solidarity has arisen and is arising out of the practical life as it is developing in cities and towns in the United States.

Another very interesting example of the way in which organizations have responded to the demands of practical situations is revealed in the experience of charitable organizations. The charity organization movement, for example, was introduced in this country, following the English precedent, immediately after the general business depression of 1873-77. Possibly the difficulties incurred in relieving the destitution of that period may have hastened the organization movement.<sup>2</sup> At any rate the movement for charity organization was a democratically stimulated one.

<sup>1</sup> One of the most interesting experiments is the "social unit" plan recently established in Cincinnati. See *Survey*, November 15, 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Warner, *American Charities* (1908), p. 442.

It had its basis in the need for co-ordination of competitive and conflicting agencies, and in the essential fact that any pathological maladjustment requiring some kind of aid or assistance is fundamentally a social or group matter.<sup>\*</sup> The schedules of causes of poverty, for example, that have been published by the Charity Organization Society since 1888 reveal very clearly a striking growth of the essentially social or group nature of what is called poverty. A comparison of the various revisions with the first schedules of 1888 shows in a very convincing fashion the revolution in theory and practice in charitable work which has followed as a result of the experience of forty years in actual contact with concrete, living problems. That revolution may be summarized in the statement that the shift has been one from a subjectivistic, individualistic basis to a group basis; practical charity work had discovered the group and the meaning of the fact of group solidarity as the point of departure. In place of the individual as a unit there arose a plexus of group relations out of which the individual could be separated only by an abstraction.

Without further illustration of the change in municipal life and consciousness, we may turn to a similar development in rural districts. The community-life movement is a recent and growing one. The rural-community movement offers a peculiarly striking example of the growth of the recognition of the group, because in the rural districts the individualistic attitude reached its greatest development and permanence. But the forces at work are tending to incorporate the rural life not only into the economic and thought life of the larger national and state groups, but are creating local solidarity and a community interest which furnishes the necessary preparation for effective community organization. First among the factors which have made this possible are the increased means

<sup>\*</sup> Devine suggests the fact of this change in these words: "Within the past few years a noticeable change has taken place in the conference of charities, in the discussions among social workers, in the special periodicals devoted to social problems, and in the more general daily and periodical press. A new unity has been discovered underlying various charitable activities which center in the homes of the poor. It has become apparent that relief societies, charity organization societies, religious, educational, and social agencies, and public departments charged with the care of dependents, form practically a single group with many common interests, methods, difficulties, and dangers."—Devine, *Principles of Relief*, p. 10.

of communication and transportation. The coming of the telephone, rural free delivery of mail, the development of better roads, better electric and steam railroads, and the invention of the automobile have made the rural districts part of the social organism to a remarkable degree. Economically the farmer has become intricately dependent on numerous remote and varied industries. Like the city dweller his home has been invaded again and again by industry, and one by one occupations have been removed from it to other specialized industrial agencies. The rapid extension of communication has made possible the creation of a different and better type of mind in rural life and the development of a real psychic national unity.

As a result of the modifications that have taken place in means of communication and in the economic life of rural communities, and with the discovery of the economic and social solidarity of the rural districts, there has developed the rural community social life. There is an increasing tendency on the part of rural communities and their leaders to recognize not only the legitimate function of amusement and entertainment but also, which is of chief interest to this discussion, the essential fact of the *group*, the community as the true local unit.

This same spirit is seen in the field of education, where more, modern types of educational effort are being carried on. The development of the school as a social center, in some places, the readjustment of the curriculum to meet the needs prescribed by local social conditions, the attempt to create a community interest and loyalty which will attract and retain the rising leadership, the broadening of school activity to include a closer relation with community activities: these are all expressions of a community sense, of a consciousness of group needs and of an interest in a social agency which is designed to supply them.

The extent to which the same community spirit is finding expression, is shown in the way in which religious attitudes and organizations are being modified in so many rural districts. This is seen in several ways, first, in the growing emphasis on the importance of the local group as a religious end; secondly, the way in which pre-existing sectarian division lines are melting away



before the group solidarity; and thirdly, the way in which the religious organization is being broadened to include, in an increased measure, the group activities. All of these, of course, have been influenced by leadership and by outside programs and experiments, but they show quite clearly a shift of emphasis and attention not only from an individualistic to a group type of religion, but also from a conception of religious institutions as divisive agencies to a conception of such institutions as a group concern and group unifying agency. Here as elsewhere, the central feature of religious programs and practices that show most signs of life in rural communities is the recognition of the solidarity of the group and of its place in practical life.

The foregoing pages of this chapter have been designed to point out some of the more patent ways in which American life since 1880 has been undergoing a transition. The effort has been to present this transition as the background of changing *mores* and practices which give color and meaning and setting to the chapters which are to follow. The picture is necessarily incomplete. The complete picture would involve the whole social history of the United States. The central feature which has characterized the transition is the growth in practical, living experience of group solidarity, the increasing recognition on the part of the practical man of the essentially social nature of many of the phases of living, and of an almost unconscious increasing use of the principle of group solidarity in meeting concrete problems. The central place of the group as a matter of actual life is a working principle which has been developed as one of the interesting achievements of the last four decades. The transition is not yet complete; it has not yet been realized fully in any one line nor at all in some others, but that it has been and is going on seems quite plain. The subsequent chapters will attempt to show that a similar transition has taken place in social theory between 1880 and the present time.

## II. WARD'S USE OF THE GROUP CONCEPT, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO HIS "DYNAMIC SOCIOLOGY"

This chapter will attempt to summarize, first, the leading examples of Ward's explicit use of the group concept, or of synonymous terms as a tool of sociological thought; secondly, the implied

use of such a concept; and thirdly, the results upon his sociological system of his use or failure to use such a tool of thought.

Before proceeding further with the discussion it will be well to point out the reasons for the selection of Ward, and chiefly his earliest work, *Dynamic Sociology*, as a point for comparison with contemporary sociology. The aim in the study is not to present an evaluation of Ward's contribution to sociological thought, but to utilize his work as a convenient point at the beginning of sociology in America to make clear the shift in method that has taken place in respect to the use of the group concept. Ward is generally conceded to be the first of American sociologists in point of time at least. The appearance of his *Dynamic Sociology* in 1883, the writing of which occupied the preceding ten years, marked the beginning of the study of sociology in America.<sup>1</sup> Whatever value sociologists may attach to Ward's work, there can be little doubt of the inspiring rôle he has played among American sociologists.<sup>2</sup> Whatever new developments may arise in social theory, whatever changed methods subsequent sociology may introduce, Ward's work will always claim a considerable place in the continuity of that stream of thought which we call sociology.<sup>3</sup> Just what that place is, is without the province of this discussion, except in so far as it relates itself to one particular inquiry.

The selection of Ward acquires added significance from the facts that have been presented in the preceding chapter, that the period since Ward wrote his first book has been a period in which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Small, "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, XXII (1916), 748 ff.

<sup>2</sup> For evidence sustaining this point see "Appreciation of Ward," *American Journal of Sociology*, II, 61-78 where some present-day sociologists give an estimate of the place of Ward in their own intellectual history.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Small has called attention in his "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, XXI (1916), 750, to Ward's isolation from the stream of thought embodied in the social sciences in Europe, particularly the work of the German thinkers. Dr. Small has performed a unique piece of work in showing the continuity of that stream with modern sociology. Without challenging the correctness of Dr. Small's view of Ward's isolation, the suggestion may be hazarded that a development of the Comtean stream in the case of Ward's intellectual ancestry might relieve a part of the isolation which seems so abrupt. Possibly after some sociologist has done for the line of thought via Comte what Dr. Small has done so ably for the German connection the former may assume greater relative importance.

American life has been undergoing fundamental social changes in every phase of its existence. Not only has there gone on this marvelous transformation of the social life in general, as a practical growth, but also the same period marks the growth of the scientific spirit which has affected the thought life of America in every phase of its development. The period marks the application of the evolutionary philosophy and the scientific method not only to the physical and biological sciences, but latterly also to the social sciences, to philosophy, and to religion. The period has been one of rapid intellectual readjustment, of crumbling hypotheses and points of view and of methods of such a far-reaching nature as to mark practically the birth of a whole new era in both theory and practice.<sup>1</sup> The thought may be expressed in Dr. Small's words as the "drive toward objectivity." The roots of the new currents of thought which we now see about us go back far into the past. The new trends were long in preparation, but their coming to prominence in American thought life has been almost wholly confined to the period since Ward wrote his first book in sociology. In few, if any, periods of the world's history have changes of such momentous implications for all types of thought taken place in such a brief period of time.

The development of the scientific method in the various sciences, and the fruitful discoveries that have taken place in the last four decades, were emphasized by the papers presented at the St. Louis Congress of Arts and Sciences. Almost without exception the speakers find in this period the coming of a new age for those sciences.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robinson points out that two facts of transcendent importance were discovered in the second half of the nineteenth century, namely, Darwin's doctrine of the descent of man from lower organisms and Lyell's collection of geological evidence to show the antiquity of man. *The New History*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> "In his recently published autobiography, Herbert Spencer asserts that at the time of issue of his work on biology (1864), not one person in ten or more knew the meaning of the word; and among those who knew it, few cared to know anything about the subject. That the attitude of the educated public toward biological science could have been thus indifferent, if not inimical, forty years ago, seems strange enough now even to those of us who have witnessed in part the scientific progress subsequent to that epoch. But this was a memorable epoch, marked by the advent of the great intellectual awakening ushered in by the generalizations of Darwin, Wallace, Spencer,

In the field of religion the period includes the older conflict between the developing scientific method and the older theology. More recently there has appeared the important swing of religious thought to the social approach not only to religious origins in general but to Christianity in particular. The appearance of the so-called social interpretation of the whole Christian sacred literature, and of the lives and personalities of its founders and outstanding characters, marks but one phase of the vital changes of religious thought in America in the closing quarter of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century. Not even the Protestant Reformation, with all its historic importance and convulsive upheavals, created changes and modifications in religious thought of such deep and fundamental significance as those that have peacefully permeated the American religious world during the period mentioned.

To do more than make the briefest general reference to these elements in the transition period is beyond the purpose here. They are cited merely for the purpose of pointing out the transition nature of the intellectual life of the period which this paper has under consideration. The movements in the thought of the period and the course of the actual life of the country during the same time have gone along together. The causal relation between the two is an intricate and important problem, but it too is outside the limits of the present discussion.

With reference to the particular attention to be paid to *Dynamic Sociology*, several reasons justify such a course. In the first place, the chronological fact of its appearance at the beginning of what has been termed the transition period gives it prominence. This is especially possible because, as stated before, the whole of Ward's sociological structure is not under review, so that a selected part may be taken for the purpose in hand. The purpose relieves one from the discussion of each of Ward's writings. Furthermore,

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and their coadjutors. And the quarter of a century which immediately followed this epoch appears, as we look back upon it, like an heroic age of scientific achievement.

. . . . It was an age during which most men of science, and thinking people in general, moved forward at a rate quite without precedent in the history of human advancement."—Woodward, "The Unity of Physical Science," *International Congress of Arts and Sciences*, St. Louis (1904), IV, 3.

there is justification for the choice in the view expressed by Dr. Small that Ward's whole system is contained in *Dynamic Sociology*, viz.:

Although Ward afterward wrote three major works, besides two minor ones and numerous monographs, in exposition of his views, I have never discovered that, in any essential particular, they added to or subtracted from the system contained in *Dynamic Sociology*. Ward's sociology seems to have received form and substance, as the Germans say, *aus einem Gusse*. All that he did later was the enlarging of replicas or details.<sup>1</sup>

For convenience therefore one may take his earliest work as a basis, and utilize subsequent works as elaborations and elucidations of his central system. With this preliminary outline by way of introduction we are now prepared for a more detailed study of Ward's use of the group concept in his sociological system.

This analysis seeks to discover the extent and nature of the use made of the group concept in Ward's thinking, particularly in the initial formation of his system of sociology. In general, the most striking thing about the work under review is the absence of an express use of the group concept as a tool of analysis or explanation. As such, the group concept is absent in Ward's earlier work and largely so in his whole system. This does not mean that he has neglected the factors of association or of all groups whatsoever in his thinking. On the contrary, as will be pointed out later, he takes note of the social factor in general, but his sociology is never related to such a concept as the group as its central feature, at least not in express terms. Though modified in some respects, his sociology remained as it was in his first book, essentially an individualistic one. His thinking was fundamentally based on what Professor Ford<sup>2</sup> has called the individual hypothesis as against the social hypothesis. The whole of the contrast between the sociology of Ward and the newer sociology in America may be summarized in the contrast suggested by these two hypotheses. The conception which underlay the first volume of *Dynamic Sociology*, namely, aggregation, though modified in minor details, remained the corner stone of Ward's thinking. Whether dealing

<sup>1</sup> Small, "Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, XXI, 752.

<sup>2</sup> *Natural History of the State*.

with the problems of social origins or the development of an individual, the hypothesis was that of the individual rather than the group, as the starting-point. The details of these general observations will receive elaboration in subsequent pages.

The term "group," as intimated above, occurs rarely, if at all, in *Dynamic Sociology*. It finds more frequent but still relatively rare expression in *Pure Sociology*. To assume from the absence of this express term that the social factor was not a part of Ward's system of thought would be a most serious error. In order to estimate properly, therefore, the place which the group occupied in Ward's thought, one must take account not merely of specific references to it as such, but also of such other terms as have a synonymous or similar meaning. The end sought here is to discover the use made of a fact that might be called indifferently a group, or society, or association, etc., rather than to discover a use of a mere *term*. We are interested in the concept rather than the word, and are led to include such terms as society, troop, horde, association, state, race, which indicate a conception of some kind of situation in which persons are in an interacting plexus of relations, a stimulus and response situation. To attempt to catalogue all such terms used by Ward even in his first work alone would be a large and relatively fruitless task. Attention will be centered rather on the treatment of certain problems in which use is made of the concept in order to see just how far it penetrates, how adequately it serves as a tool of analysis, and in how far it is faulty in scope and application. Possibly the contrast with contemporary sociology which may appear as a result of the study will prove to be one mainly of degree rather than of kind, or of less emphasis as against greater emphasis. In pursuance of this plan of study we shall take up several problems which occupied Ward in his earliest work, such as the problem of the origin of language, of society, of ethics, of the mind, of the state, the problem of education, and the problem of legislation and of government. These will show quite clearly the central factor we seek, namely, the place of the group in *Dynamic Sociology*.

As an approach to the discussion, the first interesting point is the origin of society. Society, as defined by Ward, "in its literal

or primary sense is simply an association of individuals."<sup>1</sup> Without further investigation of the nature and origin of society, one could see in this statement the essence of Ward's whole sociological viewpoint, namely, the priority of the individual. This atomistic viewpoint, as will appear throughout this investigation, runs through the whole of Ward's study. The group is a result, the individual, a datum. Lest too much be anticipated, it will be well to inquire further into Ward's conception of society and of the group, and particularly of the question of the "social nature" of man. It will be well to cite Ward's views at length at this point, because it is a vital issue in the whole discussion.

If, then, one take the definition of society as given by Ward, the questions naturally arise how and when and why did society originate; if the group is subsequent, a result, how did it arise; if men were originally anti-social, how did they become social? To most of these questions one can discover pretty definite answers.

Man is not naturally a social animal, although apparently so. "The fact, that throughout all historic time man has been found associated, has naturally given rise to the general opinions that he is by nature a social being. And this is doubtless true, for man as he is, and has been ever since the earliest traditions. But whether he was originally social by nature is quite another question and one which, as we have just seen, most probably demands a negative answer."<sup>2</sup> In this respect Ward refused to follow the dictum of Comte as to the essentially social nature of man; in other words, he insists on the individual, even the rational individual, as a datum from which the whole social process may be built up on a rational basis of socialization. Concerning the Aristotelian statement that man is a social being,<sup>3</sup> Ward says:

We are compelled to reject the doctrine of Aristotle so prevalent everywhere, that man is naturally a gregarious animal, or, as it is less objectionably stated, that man is naturally a social being. Civilized man is undoubtedly a social being, but this quality has been the result of long and severe experi-

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, I, 460.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Whether Aristotle intended or had in mind the same conception which his phrase is usually assumed to connote is not material here. We accept the interpretations usually given it because we are interested in Ward's conceptions rather than Aristotle's.

ence, by which a great change has been produced in his constitution. Not only so, but he is utterly incapable of social existence in a native state, unless protected in his life, his liberty, and his property by an artificial system of government.<sup>1</sup>

Although he admitted that none of the living forms could have been the immediate ancestors of man, and, therefore, "there will always remain the possibility that his true simian ancestor may have been a gregarious animal, still the probabilities are against this view, and it seems likely that throughout his purely animal career man possessed the associative habit only so far as was necessary for the maintenance of the race."<sup>2</sup> This quotation indicates that in no respect did the essential feature of this point undergo any change in Ward's subsequent thinking. While we find man in association wherever we see him, there could be no association without first the development of the individual to a point where he could perceive the advantage of such association. "Although we now almost always find him associated, yet, . . . this is for the purposes of protection, and seems not to have been his condition until after his intellect had become strong enough to appreciate and devise a scheme of protection."<sup>3</sup> In regard to the point in human development and social evolution at which association arose, on a still broader basis than that of protection, Ward applies the same test, namely, when the intellect had developed to a point sufficient to perceive the advantages of such association. "I regard human association as the result of the perceived advantage which it yields and as coming into existence only in proportion as that advantage was perceived by the only faculty capable of perceiving it, the intellect."<sup>4</sup> We shall have occasion later to revert to the difficulties and implications of these views. They are adduced here to show the negligible part the group plays in Ward's fundamental problem of social origins.

The problem of the social or anti-social nature of man brings into the foreground of discussion the question of the existence and origin of a gregarious instinct, sentiment, or impulse. Ward flatly rejected the position that there was any gregarious instinct

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, II, 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 463.

<sup>3</sup> *Outlines of Sociology*, p. 90.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 90-91.



or impulse which was a part of man's original nature. "That there existed in primordial man or his immediate animal ancestors an innate social sentiment which naturally drew any considerable number of men together is not only improbable a priori, but is disproved by the actual condition of the apes, from which family, as we have seen, man has undoubtedly descended."<sup>1</sup> This same thought is expressed in a later work as follows: "I am inclined to the view that man is not *naturally* a social being, that he has descended from an animal that was not even gregarious by instinct, and that human society . . . is purely a product of his reason, and arose by insensible degrees, *pari passu* with the development of his brain."<sup>2</sup>

If there was no such thing as a social instinct, and if then the individual somehow developed *in vacuo*, Ward recognized that an account of social origins must solve the problem created by his atomistic approach. With reference to the part the social instinct, which is itself a result of the conflict of desires,<sup>3</sup> played in the formation of the social nature of men Ward states:

The social instinct must have had to battle long and hard against the momentary selfish desire of individuals, and its triumph was due to the fact that the desire of each to protect himself by sustaining the community gradually came to exceed the desire to gratify immediate personal wants which were incompatible with the existence of society. . . . The maintenance of the social state, which was at its origin, and still is, opposed to the gratification of many strong personal desires, depends upon the degree to which its benefits are realized, whereby the counter-desire of a higher order antagonizes the anti-social tendencies and finally subordinates them. . . . These influences, coupled with the advantages, which an ape ought to perceive as clearly as a wolf, gradually gained for the social tendency an ascendant which secured its ultimate triumph.

The desire or instinct to associate arose after the advantages of such association were apparent to a comparatively highly developed intellect. But this desire was in conflict with the original and natural desire of man. Out of this conflict, which is not yet completed, there is developing the socialized individual who is gradually,

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, I, 451. For a summary of some of the evidence putting in question Ward's genealogy of man see Ford, *Natural History of the State*, chap. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Outlines of Sociology*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>3</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, I, 395.

under the influence of his intellect, losing his original anti-social nature and habits.<sup>1</sup> In so far then as the group can figure in the process of evolution, it is relatively secondary in both time and influence. The defects in this view will occupy the discussion later in the critical summary of other of Ward's views.

In order to illustrate the principle upon which Ward founded his thought in his sociological system, which remained essentially the same to the end of his career, it will be worth the time consumed to consider briefly his theory of aggregation as it runs through his *Dynamic Sociology*, and particularly as it has to do with that phase of the evolutionary process which may be called the human period.

The phenomena of sociology, unlike those of anthropology, but equally with those of biology and psychology, present us with an additional instance of the great cosmic process of aggregation which we have sought to trace out. Just as the highest chemical aggregates forming the chemical substance "protoplasm" are compounded and recomposed in the formation of physiological and then of morphological units, and just as these are further recomposed to form organic aggregates of the first, second, third, etc., orders, so are the highest of these organic aggregates, or men, compounded anew, on precisely the same principle, to form society. And this is the last and highest step with which we are acquainted of this long unbroken series of cosmical aggregations leading from the ultimate material atom up to social aggregate.<sup>2</sup>

This passage reveals pretty clearly the essentially atomistic principle upon which all Ward's thinking was based. He followed quite consistently the individualistic hypotheses. There are passages in which he seems to concede more or less the importance of the group or social hypothesis, but in the last analysis of his thought there is essentially an assumed priority of the individual. In other words, the group concept, which has come to be such a useful tool in the hands of contemporary sociology, never found an adequate place in the sociology of Ward. In subsequent discussion the implications and elucidations of this criticism or observation will appear more clearly. The preceding pages have sought to show the relative absence of the group as a means of

<sup>1</sup> The conflict of impulses is of course a vital factor in modern social psychology, but such a conflict situation is different from the conflict of which Ward is speaking.

<sup>2</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, I, 450-51.

explanation of the development of man, and to point out that the rôle of the group was relatively secondary.<sup>1</sup>

The large group called the state or government received considerable attention in Ward's writings, not only because he was interested in cosmic evolution and found in the state a problem of origins, but also because he was a firm believer in the ability and necessity of governmental interference in, and control of, social evolution. His use of this large group concept requires a brief treatment of his theory of the origin of the state and its possible functions.

Ward's treatment of the origins of the government or state as given in *Dynamic Sociology* followed consistently the logic of his individualistic hypothesis. Government was a phase of the development of society. The primary function of government was protection, which became essential as conflicts between individuals became more and more serious. Society was the necessary result of populousness and was not for the protection of individuals as was often thought. Society is the result of blind circumstance, not at all due to design. Government, on the other hand, is a product of genius, an invention. Government arose for protection against the conflicts of anti-social beings. Applying his idea of aggregation, Ward finds four states in the progress of social aggregation. The first state was the solitary or autarchic stage, which characterized the period between animals and human beginnings. The second or constrained stage is represented among the lowest existing tribes. It shows the beginning of constraint of anti-social beings into some kind of group relations. The third stage, the national or politarchic, is the present one. The fourth and future stage, the pantarchic, will result from the inevitable conflicts of the present national stage, thus following the law of aggregation to its ultimate mundane limits.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that Ward's thinking is at times confused by his use of association to cover both those facts in social life which MacIver in his *Community* has distinguished as "community" and "association." Community is defined by MacIver to be any area of common life, or town, or district, or country, or even wider area. An association is an organization of social beings for the pursuit of some common interest or interests. At times Ward is thinking of the one rather than the other of these two terms and falls into apparent contradictions. The real source of confusion, however, seems to be his atomistic prepossessions.

<sup>2</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, I, 464-67.

Government was an invention which brought some order into a state of incessant strife and conflict, which otherwise would have resulted in the decimation of the race. Without government there could have been no society. But government, being an invention, was an individual product, not a social one, and, once discovered, was imposed on the masses. The political history of the past has been largely the history of attempts of the few to impose the burden of government on a rebellious people. Progress has been along the line of removing the burden of government.

With the further details of his theory of the origin of government we are not concerned. The theory as outlined above was largely given up after Ward became acquainted with Gumpłowicz' group-conflict theory, which Ward adopted as the most important contribution to sociology:

Gumpłowicz and Ratzenhofer have abundantly and admirably proved that the genesis of society as we see it and know it has been through the struggle of races. I do not hope to add anything to their masterly presentation of this truth, which is without question the most important contribution thus far made to the science of sociology. We at last have a true key to the solution of the question of the origin of society.<sup>1</sup>

In his subsequent writings he utilized the group conflict as the fundamental concept in treating of the origin of the state as we now know it.<sup>2</sup> Although accepting this theory he did not alter his earlier position regarding the anti-social nature of man. On this point he says in a later work:

In *Dynamic Sociology* I took strong ground against the Aristotelian idea that man is a gregarious animal and the Comtean doctrine that he is by nature a social being, and pointed out a large number of what I called "anti-social" qualities in his nature, and I also worked out what I conceived must have been the several steps which the race has taken in its passage from the purely

<sup>1</sup> *Pure Sociology*, pp. 213-14.

<sup>2</sup> Ward, however, never accepted the multiple theory of the origin of races as did Gumpłowicz. Positing a single origin of the human race he then finds a period in which disintegration takes place, "they soon came to differ in all their details" (*Pure Sociology*, p. 201). But later a process of integration began in which group conflict played a part. It is at this period of development that he would utilize Gumpłowicz' theory. It is interesting to note that it was Ward's personal contact with Gumpłowicz that caused the latter to abandon his theory of multiple origins. See Gumpłowicz' article of appreciation of Ward, *American Journal of Sociology*, X (March, 1905), 643.

animal state to the developed social state. I do not adhere to that position now merely because I assumed it then, but rather because, notwithstanding the little real evidence, subsequent indications have tended to confirm it. I will here emphasize only one point. Human government is an art only possible in a rational being. No animal possesses a government in any such sense. The primary object of government is to protect society from just these anti-social influences, and it is generally admitted that without it society could not exist. This means that even in the most enlightened peoples the anti-social tendencies are still so strong that they would disrupt society, but for an artificial system of protection. To call man of whom this can be said a social being by nature is obviously absurd. No doubt strong social impulses exist among men, but they are the product of ages of constraint. Man may be in process of becoming a social being, but he will not have really become such until it shall be possible to dispense entirely with the protective function of government. Universal education and further centuries of custom may ultimately transform human character to this extent, until habit shall become at least a second nature, and accomplish the same result that natural selection has accomplished in making gregarious animals and social insects; but thus far society, which is the product of the collective reason working for its own interests, is still dependent upon the momentary exercise of that reason in preventing its own overthrow.<sup>1</sup>

A few more words should be said concerning the function of this large group organization called government. Ward was careful to distinguish between actual government in the past and possible government in the future. The former was a necessary evil as protective device, while the latter is an art. By utilization of the principle of attractive rather than repressive legislation, by placing the government in the hands of social scientists as an instrumentality of social control, it could be made the chief agency in directing social development toward desired ends. It would thus become the agency whereby the psychic factor could shape the group life. Ward's elaboration of this form of group activity and control has made him one of the most inspiring factors in the development of sociological thought in America.

For the purpose of paving the way for presenting the contrasts in the use of the group concept as between Ward and contemporary sociology in the United States, it is worth while to take up Ward's discussion of the nature and origin of religion, of morals, of language, and of the human mind. These will bring out quite clearly the

<sup>1</sup> Ward, *Outlines of Sociology*, pp. 91-92.

point of view and the method of approach of the contrasted positions. The four problems will be taken in order.

Ward's discussion of religion is one of the stimulating portions of his *Dynamic Sociology*, both to those who agree with him and to those who do not. We are not concerned with the merits of the controversy, but rather with the way in which he accounts for the social phenomena which are grouped under the term religion. This should show quite clearly and concisely the way in which he uses or fails to use the group as a tool of thought for his genetic account. In defining his term religion, after reviewing a long list of proposed definitions by various writers, he adopts Tylor's definition, namely, the belief in spiritual beings, as the essential feature of the term.<sup>1</sup> This definition narrows the field of what most sociologists of the present time would mean by the same term. In itself it also suggests the rational approach to the religious problem which was characteristic of his discussion, as subsequent references will show. Not only is religion rational, and thus a late development, but it is also an individual matter, coming largely from the achievements of more brilliant individual speculators upon the mysterious phenomena of human environment and human subjective experience. The presence of the rational idea in Ward's thought is illustrated in the following statement of the position of religion:

Looking back now over the whole field, there remains no difficulty in recognizing the true position of religion as a social factor. It was simply a necessity of the condition of things that it should have come into existence as it has done. The placing of a rational being in a world such as this is constitutes the all-sufficient explanation of the development of a religious sentiment and religious institutions. The fact was pointed out with some care in the Introduction, that the phenomena of the universe present to the untaught mind a maze of incomprehensible data for speculation. The true nature of phenomena can only be known after ages of profound scientific thought and labor. . . . Religion owes the possibility of its existence to the paradoxes of nature . . . to the incontrovertible fact that in the nature of things a rational being must, as a direct and inevitable consequence of his rationality, be led into most vital errors, for which he must further be deceived into cherishing the most intense regard, until, by the slow march of solid

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, pp. 262-63.

knowledge and the ultimate adoption of the scientific method of laborious research and crucial tests, truth at last emerges and the clouds of errors vanish.<sup>1</sup>

In pursuing the argument, Ward points out that the belief in deities was a part of the speculative efforts of seers to explain the phenomena of nature for which there could be no true explanation. In accounting for the creation of deities or gods or spirits he accepts both the objective and the subjective explanations. By the former he means the tendency of primitive peoples to attribute to phenomena of nature, particularly the unusual and strange events, their own characteristics. By the subjective origin of deities he means essentially the Spencerian theory of deductions based on individual experiences such as dreams, trances, etc.<sup>2</sup> It is only with the coming of the scientific method and point of view that the regular and non-spectacular occurrences of nature attract the attention of the student, in the effort to explain such movements by the principle of law rather than by reference to an erratic unseen being. Ward's thought in this respect is along the line of Spencer's statement of the decreasing province of the unknown.

This summary is sufficient for the purpose of showing that Ward's approach to the problem of the origin of religion is essentially individualistic. The group finds no place in the process at all. In so far as it has a function, it is merely the receptive and conserving agency, once the more able members of the race have projected their speculations. Coming after the developing of the "rational faculty" religion could have no part in the formation of that part of the mind. Being essentially a philosophy of origins based on false premises, it necessarily acted as a barrier to the development of science and truth, and is bound to dissolve as each of its preserves is taken away by scientific explanations. The error which comes to view so clearly in Ward's discussion of this particular problem is his failure to utilize the group as the center of his thinking. The contrast between the modern discussions of the origin and nature of religion and that presented by Ward is essentially that presented by the use of the group concept on the one hand, which implies an adequate social psychology, and the neglect of the

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, II, 270.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 263-64.

group concept on the other hand.<sup>1</sup> Ward's discussion of this particular problem reveals very clearly his need of the group concept in his thought, and the difficulties in which his lack of it involved him.

Closely allied with the problem of the origin of religion is that of the evolution of morals, and of moral codes. Both problems have been a source of never-ending speculation. Like the problem of religious origins, the problem of morals affords an opportunity to bring out distinctly the extent to which Ward has made the most of the group as a concept of sociological thought. The contribution of sociology to ethics rests largely upon the assumption of the group approach to the whole moral problem, both for an explanation of the origin and for the tests of validity of ethical codes. We shall be interested chiefly in discovering how far Ward has gone in that direction rather than in attempting to set forth a rounded discussion of his system of morals as he has sketched it in his first work.

Ward was much influenced by Spencer's treatment of ethics from the utilitarian standpoint. Happiness is the ultimate end of all effort,<sup>2</sup> whether the actor be an individual or a group. Those acts which promote the greatest happiness in general are good; those which do not are bad.<sup>3</sup> From this test of happiness all acts and all codes must find their final moral authority. The absolute systems of ethics can have no standing except in so far as they conform to the fundamental test of happiness. In that respect Ward's thinking marks a step away from the theological systems toward a more pragmatic theory of moral criteria. In general his system shares the advantages as well as the limitations of the utilitarian school.

Ward recognized, of course, that certain acts of man as well as acts of animals are of a non-moral nature. Man's acts approach

<sup>1</sup> Space prevents a discussion of the way in which the growing recognition of the group and the use of an adequate social psychology have changed the whole religious perspective. As illustrations of the point, the following are suggested: King, *The Origin and Development of Religion*; Ames, *Psychology of Religion*; and Coit, *The Soul of America*. The contrast between these books and Ward is too apparent to need further comment.

<sup>2</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, II, 108.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 133-34.



those of animals (1) during childhood, (2) in idiocy, and (3) in savagery.<sup>1</sup> The distinction between man's acts in general and those of animals is that the latter are impulsive while the former are rational.<sup>2</sup> The latter spring from the intellect and can take place only after the intellect has been evolved.

In so far as man is concerned, a moral situation arises when there is a conflict of desires. These desires may be either internally or externally stimulated. The conflict is one that is finally settled by the triumph of the strongest desire determined on a pleasure-pain basis.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, "Ethics is the science of psychological mechanics."<sup>4</sup> The individual reason may be mistaken in its pleasure-pain valuations, but once the reckoning is made, it acts on that line which apparently offers most pleasure. In so far as a moral instinct appears like the social instinct, it is a result of a conflict of desires<sup>5</sup> running through a long period of history. In tracing the genesis of sympathy and the altruistic attitude, Ward shows how in the lower stages of mental development the egoistic attitude and egoistic actions predominate. As we rise in the scale of mental development the altruistic interest increases in power and tends more and more to control conduct as civilization advances.<sup>6</sup> The savage represents a stage midway between the lower forms and the highest forms of human development. This whole progressive movement is a result of a developing intellect which perceives an ever wider range of happiness, including the welfare of others besides the actor. In developing this idea of the progressive ascendancy of altruism Ward seems to be following Comte, whose sociological view, according to one writer, has two distinct characteristics, of which one is "that it takes for granted as an empirical fact the existence of two tendencies in human nature, the egoistic and the altruistic, of which the latter, either naturally and unconsciously or assisted by intellectual knowledge and control, is gradually gaining the ascendancy over the former."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, II, 331.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 328.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 395.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 329.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 328.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 445-47.

<sup>7</sup> Merz, *History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, IV, 534. The other characteristic referred to is that of the law of the three states.

Ward recognized the fact of diversity of moral codes and the consequent fallibility of conscience. Moral codes are "built up from the united judgments of men of all ages."<sup>1</sup> These codes display varying degrees of perfection both as to their content and their application. But all moral codes and rules are but the reflection of the actual morals, not the creators of them. Since moral action depends upon intelligence, the real moral education is the education of intelligence, the education of information.<sup>2</sup> The surest moral guide for conduct is knowledge of the relation one sustains to his fellows, to society, and to the world in general.<sup>3</sup> Complete knowledge of the relative competing desires would lead inevitably to the choice of the good.<sup>4</sup>

Without going into Ward's discussion further, enough has been given to suggest the almost complete absence of the group as a method of approach to the moral problem. The social or group approach to the problems of morals and religion, which is the central method in contemporary study of social origins, was not present in his treatment of either. With him the whole problem of the origin of moral codes and standards was solved by the individual intellect passing upon the relative worth of competing desires, which in themselves were essentially individual phenomena. On this point Ward again reveals clearly the contrast between his fundamental conception and that of the newer sociology. The former approaches his problem from an individualistic standpoint. The group is nearly ignored, while in the latter the group is the fundamental concept upon which the sociological structure is being reared. It goes without saying, almost, that Ward's discussion of morals is a logical result of his individualistic psychology. The purpose here is merely to point out the fact that in so promising a field as the problem of the evolution of morals, Ward almost completely ignored the fundamental tool—the group concept.

Ward's discussion of the origin and significance of language is a defective treatment of an admittedly difficult problem. We shall

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, II, 144.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 360.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Although it is beside our problem, it is interesting to note that Ward always has in mind, when speaking of a conflict of desires, disjunctive values only. That is, the choice is either one or the other. He never considers a very common type of valuation problem in which the problem is that of reconstructing the whole conflict situation so as to save both competing values.

endeavor to discover how far he has made use of the group concept in his discussion of this fundamental factor in human development. In order to present a basis for certain remarks it will be well to summarize briefly his theory of the origin of language. Language is a much broader term than speech.<sup>1</sup> Language is the product of thought and includes forms of communication other than speech.<sup>2</sup> The latter is a "mode in which language presents itself in man who happens to possess the organs which render it possible."<sup>3</sup> "Language, therefore, includes four distinguishable forms of communication, namely gesture language, oral speech, written language, and printed language."<sup>4</sup> These also represent an ascending scale of evolutionary progress of the most important kind. The course of evolution from the lowest to the highest form of communication was a gradual and natural one. Even at that point where the psychic phenomena begin there could be no hiatus:

If at this particular point where psychic phenomena begin there is an absolute break, and something is introduced whose elements are not contained in anything that preceded it, I do not see why we should find fault with the introduction of any number of such external elements or factors, and there seems to be no reason for stopping short of the most arbitrary theological explanation of all the phenomena of the universe.<sup>5</sup>

One might say in passing that Ward did not succeed in bridging that gap which he feared. Admitting the pre-speech type of communication or language, which is called the gestural form of language, he furnished no process or explanation of the process whereby the gestural type of language took on meaning, and became "significant." Right here of course is the fundamental problem of social psychology, the key to the whole problem of the origin of language, of mind, and all that those terms signify in human evolution. Ward could not furnish this because he was involved in his individualistic prepossessions. He had no tools of thought or analysis by which he could save himself from the hiatus mentioned above. The thing that he lacked was the group concept as the starting-point for his thinking and an adequate social psy-

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, II, 180.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Pure Sociology*, p. 123.

chology to elucidate the process. He recognized, of course, that it would be wholly impossible for a "race leading what is understood as a 'solitary life, i.e., a life in which there is the least degree of association consistent with the continuance of the species,' ever to acquire the art of speech,"<sup>1</sup> but of the essentially social origin of speech through the process of stimulus and response and the resultant development of meaning he was entirely unaware. It remained for contemporary social psychology to fill in the breach which has been so conspicuous in sociological thought even up to the present time.<sup>2</sup>

As in all the problems of origins of which we have treated, Ward falls back upon the development of individual intelligence as the explanation of the origin of speech or human communication. The individual first developed intelligence through the acquisition of a brain and then proceeded to form a language. As he stated it:

The pressing need for some means of intercommunication sufficiently accounts for the development of language. With the advance of brain mass and brain structure, there grew up ideas and thoughts. These demanded expression and this demand constituted a new set of desires. The same influence which created these new desires furnished the faculty whose exercise devised the means for their satisfaction. Thought was not content simply to struggle for expression. It applied the indirect method. Unable to think in such a manner as to convey the nature of the thought directly to other minds, it devised means by which its character could be manifested through the physical organs of the body in such a way as to affect the senses of others, and be conveyed through these to others' minds.<sup>3</sup>

These words give a pretty good summary of Ward's point of view upon the matter now under discussion. He assumes the priority of the individual mind which has thoughts it wants to express. The group comes in only secondarily as furnishing the field for the expression of thoughts. Of the fundamental importance of the group in creating thought and mind, Ward has no

<sup>1</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, I, 454.

<sup>2</sup> The point suggested in the paragraph is the key to the whole criticism which I am trying to make. It is capable of wide expansion beyond the possible limits of this part of the discussion. For elucidation I refer to the lectures and published articles of Professor George H. Mead, who has made this his peculiar contribution to the field of psychological sociology.

<sup>3</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, II, 182.

conception. The position which he takes is exactly the opposite of that of modern social psychology. In other words, Ward starts with the individual, while the latter starts with the group. Here again we see the pitfalls into which the lack of a proper understanding of the group as the fundamental sociological concept led Ward. He could give us no adequate account of the origin of language, just as he could give us no adequate account of the other human phenomena, partly because of his failure to grasp the significance of the group as the starting-point of social analysis.

The difficulty of the traditional point of view which Ward followed is suggested by Ford in these words:

Even those who adopt the Individual Hypothesis generally admit social conditions as a proximate phase in the genesis of man. But if the argument employed to account for the transition from an unsocial ape to a social man is examined it is found logically defective. Reduced to its simplest form it comes to this, that as man becomes man he is man. The formation of society is attributed to perception of advantages through increased mental development. As one writer of this school puts the case, it dates from "the dawn of intellectuality." What caused this dawn? The affirmation imputes to the antecedent animal species a specific characteristic of the human species, and is a case of reasoning in a circle. When it is stated that man was not originally a social animal, but that later on man engaged in social intercourse, and developed speech, a primitive condition is imputed to man in which he could not have become man, but the logical hiatus is veiled by applying the term "man" to an animal of specifically different character. It is like talking of a bird that did not originally breathe air but acquired the habit through flight. *Homo alalus*, or speechless man, is a pseudo-concept. Even Haeckel, who invented the term to indicate a hypothetical phase in human genesis, says, "Man originated from the preceding stage in consequence of the gradual improvement of inarticulate animal sounds into true articulate speech." That is to say, man did not precede speech, but speech preceded man, and as speech is unquestionably a social product, the formation of community was a condition precedent to the formation of the human species.<sup>1</sup>

The discussion of the problem of the origin of language leads directly to the problem of the origin and nature of the mind, because of the close relation of the two. As has been stated above, Ward assumed, or rather attempted to prove, the development of the mind as the precursor of language, the latter being an inven-

<sup>1</sup> Ford, *Natural History of the State*, pp. 127-28. The reference to Ford does not imply that the writer of this paper shares Ford's views of the state or of sociology.

tion of the mind to express thoughts and ideas which already existed. In that respect he was following the traditional view which prevailed then and which still infests a good deal of sociological theory. The essential factor in the evolution of the mind was the increased brain capacity which is sufficient to explain the whole human era of evolution:

Without inquiring how it happened that the creature called man was singled out to become the recipient of this extraordinary endowment, we may safely make two fundamental propositions, which tend to show that this question is not as important as it seems. The first is that if the developed brain had been awarded to any one of the other animals of nearly the same size of man, that animal would have dominated the earth the same way that man does. The other is that a large part of what constitutes the physical superiority of man is directly due to his brain development.<sup>1</sup>

The way in which the brain was developed through the process of individual survival is summarized in this way:

That extraordinary brain development which so exclusively characterizes man was acquired through the primary principle of advantage. Brain does not differ in this respect from horns or teeth or claws. In the great struggle which the human animal went through to gain his supremacy it was brain that finally enabled him to succeed, and under the biologic law of selection, where superior sagacity meant fitness to survive, the human brain was gradually built up cell upon cell, until the fully developed hemispheres were literally laid over the primary ganglia and the cranial walls enlarged to receive them.<sup>2</sup>

While increase of brain was the cause of so many qualities which are regarded as strictly human, Ward recognized that it was also an effect of the tendency of human beings to associate. He suggests, however, that this tendency to associate may not have arisen until after the brain had been sufficiently increased by other causes to enable the individuals to perceive the advantage of association.<sup>3</sup> In other words, as shown in the discussion of the origin of society, the group enters in as a serious factor in human development only after there had been a considerable development of the reflective powers of man. Once that stage had been reached, the social factor became one, and possibly the most important, factor

<sup>1</sup> *Pure Sociology*, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> *Psychic Factors of Civilization*, p. 262.

<sup>3</sup> *Dynamic Sociology*, I, 438.

in future development. The individual gradually becomes transformed into a more and more social being, but always starting with a considerable development of what is called mind as the first step in the series of development.

In general it may be said that both phylogenetically and ontogenetically Ward takes the mind as a datum. It is a thing in itself. It is dependent on, a function of, the brain mass, but it is something more. It has an existence. It is an entity.<sup>1</sup> It may be developed and allowed to improve, but it is not created by a social environment. The group merely furnishes the material upon which it may work. In other words, his psychological view was both individualistic and non-functional. To illustrate some of the indications of his limitations with particular reference to the group factor, several quotations may be adduced. These are drawn from that one of his later works in which he is particularly interested in showing the fundamental part played by the environment in the development of genius. There, if anywhere, one would expect a correction of his individualistic prepossessions. Of the general relation of the "mind" to environment he says:

But if they (natural forces) are to accomplish anything they must be freed. It is the same with the forces of mind. They are ever pressing and only need to be freed in order to achieve. But that from which they must be freed is the environment. Tarde was right. The environment represents opposition. The material surroundings are perpetually checking and repressing the spontaneous efforts of mind.<sup>2</sup>

This statement shows quite clearly the psychology running through Ward's thinking. The mind to him is a thing in itself; what it needs is room to unfold. The self is given as an imprisoned power which needs but to be freed. It may be stunted and maimed by an unfavorable environment, but it is there to be realized. It might be objected to this criticism that Ward is merely crediting each biological organism with the characteristics embodied in the germ plasm, which are the energy deposits of the past but require a favorable nurture before they can survive and grow. If Ward

<sup>1</sup> In a later book, *Psychic Factors of Civilization*, pp. 225-26, Ward refers to the conception of the mind as an entity, as the chief error in social thought. His own writings confirm his judgment in this respect.

<sup>2</sup> *Applied Sociology*, p. 128.

means no more than that, his view is sound so far as it goes.<sup>1</sup> It stops short then, however, with a negative interpretation of the development of the mind or self. It fails to utilize the whole field of the positive development of the mind or self in a group life. The problem is more than one of removing an oppressing environment; it is the problem of the positive creation of a mind through the interstimulation and response between social beings.<sup>2</sup>

Speaking further of the importance of the environment in social development, Ward says:

The real question is, what kind of minds would persons thus isolated have? (That is, persons shut off from association.) It is only too obvious that their minds would be almost completely blank. No amount of native mental capacity could prevent this. A Bacon or a Descartes, if made the subject of such an experiment, would get no farther than one of moderate powers. He would appear to ordinary persons a fool. Locke was right. Mind without experience is a blank sheet of paper or an empty cabinet. The substratum of mind is nothing until it is supplied with something to exercise itself upon.<sup>3</sup>

This statement displays a pretty clear conception of the significance of what has been called social inheritance, or knowledge, as Ward would prefer to call it. Mind is still, however, a thing which comes into possession of, or exercises itself upon, external

<sup>1</sup> Since the criticism attributes no exception to Ward's whole viewpoint there is no reason to believe that the criticism does him an injustice. He is thinking of the "mind," not the germ plasm.

<sup>2</sup> The criticism of Ward's general position is suggested in the following brief quotation from Dewey: "Speaking in general terms, there is no more a problem of the origin of society than there is of the origin of chemical reactions; things are made that way. But a certain kind of associated or joint life when brought into being has an unexpected by-product—the formation of those peculiar acquired dispositions, sets, attitudes, which are termed mind. This by-product continually gains in relative importance. It increasingly becomes the significant acquisition among all the varied reorganizations of native tendencies. That anything which may properly be called mind or intelligence is not an original possession but is a consequence of the reorganization of instincts under the conditions supplied by associated life in the family, in the schools, in the market place, and the forum, is not remote inference from a speculative reconstruction of the mind of primitive man; it is a conclusion confirmed by the development of specific beliefs, ideas, and purposes in the life of every infant now observable."—"Need for Social Psychology," *Psychological Review*, XXIV, 272.

<sup>3</sup> *Applied Sociology*, p. 270.



objects. Ward has no psychology by which to explain the process of the development of the self. His persons are still isolated individuals which appropriate knowledge. The mechanical nature of the educational process is illustrated by his use of the box analogy. According to this analogy, the brain is a kind of receptacle into which knowledge enters as a content. The boxes may be of varied quality; some of mahogany, some inlaid with precious stones, while others are of cheaper material down to the very poorest strawboard incapable of holding anything. The varied boxes, except the very poorest, are capable of holding the same contents, the greatest truths ever discovered. A mahogany box with poor contents is inferior to a cruder, less perfect box with better contents. The contents are knowledge, the acquired qualities. The mind is represented by both the box and its contents. Ward's educational program rested upon the problem of bringing the mind, the knower, into possession of truths to be known, the problem of epistemology.

The criticism to be made against Ward's position is not to question his appreciation of the part played by accumulated human experience in the development of people, nor of the part played by environment and opportunity in the creation of diversities in achievement. His criticism of the hereditarians was sound, yet his approach remained essentially individualistic, on account of his lack of an adequate social psychology. In other words, he possessed no basic process by which he could explain the essentially social nature of the mind even if he had so desired. His individualistic approach to the whole problem of evolution precluded an adequate grasp of the essence of his problem. He was unconscious of the essential place of the group in sociology.

Before leaving the study of Ward's sociology in relation to the group concept, attention must be called to the fact that those important groups, which have been called the primary groups, receive practically no attention in *Dynamic Sociology*. More attention was given, as pointed out above, to the larger political groupings such as society and the state. The small groups such as the family, the neighborhood, the "borough," the community, have come to be recognized as fundamental and primary in their

relation to human behavior. In comparison with these local groupings, including the occupational groups, the larger political units are relatively unimportant. Ward did not perceive the significance of the smaller groups as factors in the development of human nature, and in social control. In other words he failed to use the group concept at the most vital part of social analysis. His thinking was that of an individualistic biologist attempting to create a sociology without the group as its chief corner stone.

In his conception of evolution his unit was the individual. The individual carried on and was the end of the selective process. The struggle was always an individual one. The individual side of the process was stressed to the neglect of the factor of co-operation as a concomitant of all struggle and as a serviceable characteristic. The place of the group unit in the evolutionary process is suggested by Darwin.<sup>1</sup> Macfarlane expresses the same view:

We accept it then, as a proven principle amongst animals lower than man, that the co-operative or social plan has ever tended to evolve and select forms which have possessed resulting advantages over the competitive plan and that such caused them to become, in spite of their apparent weakness, truly dominant groups alike in high organization, in capacity for defence, and in reproductive capacity. So it is safe to say that, for every individual which lives a keenly competitive life, a dozen can be found that are united in such social activities and in general provision for the species that the common welfare of each individual is nearly always assured. Furthermore, with advancing mentality and social organization this principle is the more perfectly exhibited.<sup>2</sup>

Baldwin refers to the factor of the group in the process of evolution in similar words, emphasizing the group side which Ward did not sufficiently appreciate. He says:

This gives, as I conceive it, a sort of selection and survival which is quite different from that recognized in the strictly biological sciences. We find that the utility to be subserved is one of conscious co-operation and union among individuals; and the unit whose selection is to secure this utility must have the corresponding characters. This unit is not the individual but a *group of individuals who show in common their gregarious or social nature in actual exercise*; each is selected in company with certain others, who survive with him and for the same reason. Thus the selective unit, considered

<sup>1</sup> *Descent of Man*, chaps. iii, v.

<sup>2</sup> Macfarlane, *The Causes and Course of Organic Evolution*, p. 776.

from the external or social point of view is a *group of individuals*, greater or smaller as the utility subserved may require; and from the point of view of the subjective or psychic process it implies the mental attitude which brings the individual into useful co-operation. Calling this latter the "personal" aspect of social fitness, we may define it by using the term "*socius*." The psychological unit is a *socius*, a more or less socialized individual, fitted to enter into fruitful social relations. And the objective requirement remains that of a group of such individuals making up a social situation. These two conceptions, then, become the watchwords of our evolutionary social psychology and sociology respectively—the "*socius*" and the "social situation."<sup>1</sup>

Ward's failure to use the group concept in his account of evolution is but one of the defects which we have seen to follow from his individualistic point of view. The group, as the fundamental fact in sociology, had not yet been discovered at the time Ward's system was built up, consequently it assumed only a secondary and insignificant place in his thinking. To what extent contemporary sociology has reversed his method of approach will be the question that will occupy the next chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Baldwin, *Darwin and the Humanities*, p. 43.

[To be continued]